

REMARKS

Claims 7-28 are currently pending in this case. By this amendment, each of claims 14, 16, and 20 has been amended. New claims 21-23, which depend from claim 14, and new independent claim 24, and claims 25-28 which depend from claim 24, have been added.

As a preliminary matter, applicants wish to thank Examiner Roberts for the teleconference with applicants' attorney, Melissa Szanto, which took place on May 5, 2003. During this teleconference, U.S. Patent No. 6,273,852 (the "'852 patent"), which was submitted in an I.D.S. dated November 20, 2002, was discussed. As a result of this conversation, applicants have amended independent claims 14 and 16 so that they clearly recite a filamentary element used for adjusting the tape that is *"distinct from and does not form part of the tape."* New independent claim 24 contains similar language. As a result of these amendments, it is clear that the recited filamentary element that is used for adjustment is a separate element from the tape. Such a separate adjustment mechanism is neither taught nor suggested by the '852 patent.

Claims 14 and 16 have further been amended to recite manipulation of the filamentary element, rather than specifically of the second end of the filamentary element, to increase or decrease tension on the tape. Claim 20 has been amended to correct a typographical error.

Applicants submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request that a notice of allowance be issued.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee due pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.16, and any other fee that may be due, to deposit Account No. 10-0750/GYN-045/MJS.

s/n 09/589,242

Should any minor points remain prior to issuance of a Notice of Allowance, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,



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